

**Department of Human Resource Management  
Office of Health Benefits**

**November 19, 2003**

**Policy:           Retiree Health Benefits Coverage for Employees Retiring from Military  
Leave Without Pay**

State employees on approved Military Leave Without Pay and who are eligible for and elect to take service retirement (not deferred) from the Virginia Retirement System (or who are eligible for and take a periodic benefit from one of the qualified Optional Retirement Plan vendors) immediately upon termination of Military Leave may enroll in the State Retiree Health Benefits Program within 60 days of their retirement date, regardless of whether they actively return to work at the end of the leave. Retiring employees must have been eligible for coverage under the State Health Benefits Program prior to the start of their leave. Enrollees must be otherwise eligible for the retiree program and adhere to all program provisions after enrollment. Medicare-eligible retirees must select a plan that coordinates with Medicare. If enrollment is not completed within 60 days of the retirement date, there will be no future opportunity to enroll.

**Policy:           Retiree Health Benefits Coverage for Survivors of Employees on Military  
Leave Without Pay**

Survivors of state employees on approved Military Leave Without Pay may enroll in the State Retiree Health Benefits Program within 60 days of the date of the employee's death if they are immediately eligible for and elect to receive survivor annuity benefits from the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). The deceased employee must have been eligible for coverage under the State Health Benefits Program prior to the start of the leave. Medicare-eligible enrollees must select a plan that coordinates with Medicare.

Survivors who have continued enrollment in the state program through Extended Coverage up to the date of the employee's death may enroll in the retiree program within 60 days of the employee's death, regardless of eligibility for a VRS survivor annuity. These enrollees will maintain the same plan option, except that Medicare-eligible survivors must select a plan that coordinates with Medicare. Membership level may be reduced but not increased at the time of enrollment in the retiree group.

If enrollment is not completed within 60 days of the employee's death, there will be no future opportunity to enroll. After enrollment in the program, all other program provisions related to either annuitant or non-annuitant survivors will apply as appropriate.